

**Amendment to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A rubber compound comprising at least one solid optionally-halogenated butyl elastomer and, at least one nanoclay, optionally at least one filler, optionally at least one curative, optionally at least one additional elastomer and optionally a stabilizer,

wherein the nanoclay has been organically modified with halogen salts of  $(CH_3)_2N^+(HT)_2$  or  $(CH_3)_2N+(CH_2-C_6H_5)(HT)$ ; wherein HT is hydrogenated tallow,

and wherein the optionally halogenated butyl elastomer is prepared from isobutylene and a  $C_4$  to a  $C_6$  conjugated diolefin and optionally a substituted vinyl aromatic monomer,

wherein the optional filler is selected from the group consisting of carbon black silica, silicates, clay, gypsum, alumina, aluminum oxide, magnesium oxide, calcium oxide, titanium dioxide, talc or a mixture thereof,

wherein the optional curative is selected from the group consisting of high-energy radiation, sulfur, bis dieneophiles, phenolic resins, amines, amino-acids, peroxides, zinc oxide or a mixture thereof; and

wherein the optional additional elastomer is selected from the group consisting of natural rubber, polybutadiene, styrene-butadiene or poly-chloroprene or an elastomer compound containing one or more of these elastomers.

2. Cancelled
3. (Original) A compound according to Claim 2, wherein the halogenated butyl is a brominated butyl elastomer.
4. (Previously Presented) A compound according to Claim 1, wherein the nanoclay is a montmorillonite.
5. (Cancelled).
6. (Original) A compound according to Claim 1, wherein the compound comprises in the range from 0.01 – 10 phr of nanoclay(s).
7. Cancelled.

PO-7949

-2-

8. Cancelled.
9. (Currently Amended) A process for preparing a compound according to Claim 1, wherein the nanoclay is admixed with the ~~optionally~~-halogenated butyl elastomer and ~~optionally the~~ further components.
10. (Original) A process according to Claim 9, wherein the compound is vulcanized subsequent to mixing.